

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 21, 2002 LB 1309, 1310

taking care of our responsibilities but we're also being responsible to the people of Nebraska in looking at ways to cut the spending growth in this state. Now I agree with Senator Brown, we need to look at the Medicaid piece. I am not on the Health Committee. I am looking for her or other people to bring amendments to deal with those areas of the budget, but I'm looking here for some way to reduce the spending growth. We could have looked at 3 percent, as the Governor has suggested. This is a compromise. This means that the university would still grow by almost \$16 million; \$16 million in a year when we don't have the income. That's a growth level that is far above the growth of our income in this state, so we are supporting our university at a greater rate than our incomes are coming in. I think it's reasonable. I am hoping that this may go part of the way towards filling our gap and I look forward to the discussion. I hope we can talk about the money side today because I don't think we have to question the value of our university or the value we put upon education. That's not the question here. The question is, where are we going to get the money and how are we going to fill the gap? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Debate on the Redfield amendment, Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, my comments aren't I think directly related to the Redfield amendment. They were questions I had yesterday before our floor debate took the turns that it did and we somewhat drifted off of the topic of adjusting the budgets of the state of Nebraska. One of the things that has bothered me for quite some time now is the generally accepted notion that we must raise taxes and, of course, the...the what we have available to us at this level are threefold: one, we can raise the sales tax rate; two, we can raise or restore the income tax rate; or, three, we can quit funding things at the local level and let those lapse back to property taxes. Those are our...apparently the only ways out of it. And my question this morning is absolutely guaranteed to make at least two people angry on the floor of the Legislature. But long before LB 1310 and LB 1309 came to us, I read in the newspapers comments from the Chair and the Vice Chair of